



The Saint and the Sultan: The Crusades, Islam, and Francis of Assisi's Mission of Peace

Paul Moses

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An intriguing examination of the extraordinary—and little known meeting between St. Francis of Assisi and Islamic leader Sultan Malik Al-Kamil that has strong resonance in today's divided world.

For many of us, St. Francis of Assisi is known as a poor monk and a lover of animals. However, these images are sadly incomplete, because they ignore an equally important and more challenging aspect of his life -- his unwavering commitment to seeking peace. In *The Saint and the Sultan*, Paul Moses recovers Francis' s message of peace through the largely forgotten story of his daring mission to end the crusades.

In 1219, as the Fifth Crusade was being fought, Francis crossed enemy lines to gain an audience with Malik al-Kamil, the Sultan of Egypt. The two talked of war and peace and faith and when Francis returned home, he proposed that his Order of the Friars Minor live peaceably among the followers of Islam—a revolutionary call at a moment when Christendom pinned its hopes for converting Muslims on the battlefield.

The Saint and the Sultan captures the lives of St. Francis and Sultan al-Kamil and illuminates the political intrigue and religious fervor of their time. In the process, it reveals a startlingly timely story of interfaith conflict, war, and the search for peace. More than simply a dramatic adventure, though it does not lack for colorful saints and sinners, loyalty and betrayal, and thrilling Crusade narrative, *The Saint and the Sultan* brings to life an episode of deep relevance for all who seek to find peace between the West and the Islamic world.

Winner of the 2010 Catholic Press Association Book Award for History

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